with its steeply sloping fields rising above the rushing mill-streams below. Still valleys sweep in attractive crescent form around and below the peaks of the Stubalpe. Everywhere in these barren farmlands from Radlpass to Lower Gleinalmspeik, the fields and meadows have been conquered from the wilderness of vast forests by means of fire and plough. Everywhere on these islands created by persistent, back-breaking peasant labour, the brown wooden farmhouses beneath their silver-grey roofs of slate defy the gales which come raging from the storm-centres of the mountain fields, and in age-old "Rauchstuben" the life-blood of ancient legends thaws again before the warmth of the open fire.

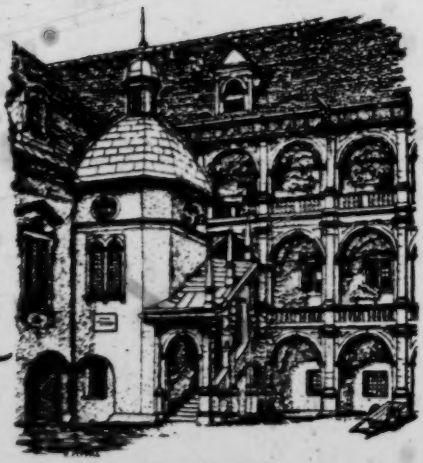
Beyond the savagery of the mountains, a world of vine-covered hills unrolls like a gay-coloured scarf before the dark girdle of the forest peasants land. On the sun-side of the mountains below the heights, the vineyards on the slopes are staked out with serried rows of vines on supporting poles. This is the picture which begins in a small way at the "Gasselberg", where with care it is possible to produce a Schilcher which has the proper tang alongside many an unassuming vintage. In the Styrian Schilchertal, between Ligist and Eibiswald, the view broadens and opens out. The vineyards there on the Hochstrassen and on the clear-cut, towering mountain ridge of Greisdorf are famous from olden times. The Engelweingarten above Stainz should be saluted with joyful respect, as should all the carefully tended vineyards where the Wildbach grapes ripen.

At the foot of this double garland of forest and vineyards is fruitful soil in which Turkish wheat prospers under a burning sun, yet despite all the riches which lie in the soil or come from the bright skies above, bad weather, misfortune and hard times have made the population adopt a grave and sometimes resigned attitude towards life.

A friend of the Styrian motherland wandering through-out the strip of country which we call West Styria and observing it with affection, would soon notice that beneath the noise and bustle of the fleeting present there lies hidden the treasure of a rich past. Roman inscriptions on stones and the tombstones of Italian officials and native Norics which are

Women of Leoben.

172
175
361



Graz, Diet Hall.

turned up in the fields by the ploughs of the peasants, now decorate the walls of many a building. On the towers and churches, especially of Mooskirchen, Stallhofen, Piber and Köflach they have been preserved as an indelible greeting from distant centuries when the world-wide power of the Roman Empire allowed our Homeland to share in its civilisation and culture.

Long after grass and the wilderness had erased the traces of Roman Noric civilisation, and a new way of life, Christianity and order had come to the Province of Salzburg, the castle of Deutschlandsberg became a centre of Salzburg planning and working. Later on, but of no less importance for development and trade, the nowadays so quiet town of Piber grew to be a far-reaching centre of culture when the house of Eppenstein gave their property to the Benedictines of St. Lamprecht. Their priory, in the parish of Piber, was a coveted living which once even boasted of a bishop. The Bailiff of Piber, however, taxed the lands of the Kainachtal down to the last peasant farm in the mountains. A circle of fortified castles guarded the roads and byways leading to Upper Styria—Haunstein, Klingenstein, the Primaresburg near Lankowitz, over the ruins of which the forest of Franziskanerkogel grows, Leonrod in the Gössnitz Valley, nowadays popularly known as Höllerrock Castle, Krems, where the keep still towers steeply above the Schlossberg, and the proudest of them all, Ober-Voitsberg, in whose shadow the inhabitants have enjoyed the privileges of citizens of a princely city ever since the time of Duke Friedrich the Handsome (1367). For many centuries life was mainly a peaceful exchange

Graz, Clock Tower.

133 You once stood in May in Wiener Neustadt on the Ungarfeld. There was the rocky wall of the Hohe Wand in the south. The Rosalien range appeared as a light coloured, enticing forest. Eastwards the green pasture-land opened out like a [874] gateway. The two gothic towers of the Theresian Military Academy were an unchanging landmark of the "ever-loyal town".

You first drove over the Semmering in time of peace. Then you were able to enjoy yourself quietly and at leisure. Giants must once have played in this area, using as dice the mountains which begin here, wild and majestic. A man of the determination of Karl Ghega was needed to tame this wilderness. He bent the mountains and the deep gorges to his will. His tunnels and viaducts alternate [496] in carrying the railroad to its highest point. The Semmering railway was the first mountain railway of the world which all others used as a model. All the railways of the Andes in South America learned from it.

[132] The Semmering district, in a pocket of warm air above cold and misty valleys, is Lower Austria's show-piece. People from all the world over come here in search of health and peace. The Viennese regard the Semmering, Rax and Schneeberg as their own estates in the Alps. Towards the east the landscape slopes gradually down to the forested knolls of the hill country. In Mönichkirchen the work of Anton Wildgans reached epic status.

IN THE WACHAU DISTRICT. In the first days of creation there may have been some question as to which was the stronger, land or water. In the Wachau, the river triumphed over the mountains, although it has still to follow a course prescribed by the former, as to where it should narrow, should turn, should form bays and inlets; rocks jut out to spur its flanks, hidden granite builds hurdles over which it is forced to leap. Between Melk and Krems nestle a dozen charming villages whose picture lingers long with the wanderers along the banks and the passengers on the Danube steamers. Weissenkirchen lies in the heart of the Wachau district in a sunny position to the south. Old courtyards, arcades, rounded archways and vinecovered houses call for attention. In the small village of Schwallenbach they will show you the old parish church and the "Devil's Wall". The boatmen of the Danube tell the story of its origin. The Devil's grandmother is said to have scoffed regularly at the columns of pilgrims and the ships of the Crusaders, moving the Archfiend one night to try to block the flow of the Danube by building this [172] stout wall. At Willendorf was found the sandstone figure of a "Venus" which archaeologists admire as a relic of matriarchal, pre-historic times. Spitz, a sleepy little Danube town at the foot of the Jauerling should not be overlooked. Backed by the four-square tower of the Hinterhaus ruins, it is in blossom time a fairy garden of pink and white. Standing out against the mountains behind are multi-coloured forests—pale green larches, rust-brown fir trees and dark pines.

361

[247]

133
245

Eisenstadt, Synagogue Death-Glass.

buildings—the Council Hall, attractive official buildings, the homes of civil servants and villas. Side by side stands the history of old Eisenstadt written in stone—the old royal free town, the Esterházy residence, the Jewish Ghetto in Unterberg and the more recent settlement of Oberberg. The Wolff Collection in the Provincial Museum has some unique monuments of Jewish culture. The Calvary Mount in the Bergkirche gives a glimpse of another world, with its painted, strikingly realistic wooden figures in curious grottos. A first inspection of Eisenstadt may well be rounded off by a visit to the wonder-working picture of the Virgin and to the tomb of Haydn in the Bergkirche.

Other attractions await us. Above Mattersburg appear the slopes of the Rosaliengebirge, covered with the luscious purple of flowering sage. One could wish that here spring might last for ever for us to admire the sea of blossom, cherry tree after cherry tree intermingled with peach and apricot, and the yellow-white blossoms of the plum, with their tangle of intertwined black twigs; great beds of strawberries flourish in the rich and fertile soil.

342

Far above the little village of Forchtenstein stands a well-preserved castle of the same name. It was once the seat of the Counts of Mattersdorf, whose forebears, Simon and Bertram, came from Spain in the year 1200 with their sister Tota, of whose beauty it was said that it had no equal throughout the world. A poet might well harbour the fancy that her beauty lives on in the spring splendour of the flowering hedges on the Rosaliengebirge. The student of history may remember that in the year 1374 the Counts of Mattersdorf and Forchtenstein placed this part of the Province under the jurisdiction of the Duke of Austria. Their escutcheon, combined with that of the Güssingers, forms today the coat-of-arms of Burgenland.

Forchtenstein.

172

The early Stone Age has left evidence of human progress in the Wulka Plain. The Bronze Age which succeeded it was marked by a consi-

FOLKSONG.

When Croatian girls are singing
To the tamburizza's sound,
You hear ancient lays a-ringing,
Every eye casts smiles around.

For they're singing of Junaken,
Their lord's rapture and distress.
Of the king's descendant, Marko,
And his wife, the proud princess.

---

derable development of traffic and trade. The Bernsteinstrasse, that famous trading highway of prehistoric times along which, about 1000 years before Christ, the honey-coloured amber, tears of the sea, was brought from the coasts of Samland to Italy, passes through the Burgenland. It crossed the Danube at Hainburg, a predecessor of the Roman road which later lead to Italy by way of Carnuntum, Ödenburg, Steinamanger and Laibach. Today Ödenburg (Sopron) belongs to Hungary. What the "Ödenburg Sack", connected to Hungary by a narrow tongue of land only five kilometres wide between the frontier and the Neusiedler Lake is to Hungary, is to Austria the "Ödenburg Spur" which limits the Burgenland to a width of four kilometres and almost cuts the northern and southern parts of the Province off from one another. Seven roads and three railways are thus cut off. The only road which connects the two regions had to be built by the Austrian Government.

"The bloody Hall", Lockenhaus Castle.

Southwards this road leads to the Oberpullendorf district, a hilly country with varied scenery and attractions of its own. Anyone interested in tracing historical developments must hasten through the Province to the spot where a range of mountains forms a barrier dividing Burgenland into two parts. The eastern corner which at the same time marks the Hungarian frontier, is the Geschriebenstein, the tallest mountain of the Province, some 2,700 feet high. Its summit affords a wide view across the plain of Raabau. On its slopes, just on the other side of the frontier at Wöllembach, on the St. Veitsberg, stood one of the best-known foundries in the Bronze Age, a prehistoric industrial centre.

Here the Burgenland reveals itself to the traveller. At the foot of the Geschriebenstein lies the forest-surrounded castle of Lockenhaus, which, with its Gothic Knights' Hall and a keep five stories high, dates back to the year 1200. Almost as old are the ruins of Landsee Castle on the borders of Lower Austria, one of the biggest castles in the country.

But to bore a tourist by dragging him from castle to castle as far as Kobersdorf would be risky, since it would—finally land him on volcanic soil.